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## NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The latest pushes by Generals Haig and Pétain respectively have given point to the statement made by Mr. Secretary Baker, of the U.S. War Department, that—the weather handicap notwithstanding—the Allied offensive in the West would be carried on untiringly throughout the winter. Monday's combined operation by the armies of Generals Anthoine and Gough, delivered on both sides of the Ypres-Staden railway, proved most successful on the wings. It has appreciably improved our hold on the north-western slopes of the Passchendaele Ridge, and in this respect should facilitate the next move by our left centre. Even more promising, however, is the fact that, while the French have reached the south-western fringe of the Houthulst Forest, our own county battalions have been able to penetrate deeply into the southern portion of this fortified labyrinth, thus compelling the enemy to withdraw his guns behind a flooded area in the interior. It remains to be seen for how long the furious German counter-attacks will delay our outflanking advance towards Staden itself.

Like General Haig, General Pétain has selected for the offensive so brilliantly launched on Tuesday a sector where the hostile defences are of exceptional strength, natural and scientific, but where an advance of a few miles only would give him command of the plain which surrounds the high Laon massif, and break the present German front at its most sensitive point, viz., the apex of the triangle occupied by the enemy on French soil. A full success here, which would involve the reduction of the Bourguignon and Nouvion plateaux, covering the road and railway from Soissons to Laon, would mean the recovery of Laon, La Fère, and Saint Quentin, and a strategic retirement by Hindenburg along the whole line from Arras to Rheims. Its attainment is bound to be a protracted business, although a simultaneous of-

fensive in the region of Saint Quentin, where the French batteries and raiding parties are unusually active, might hasten the process of eviction. As for the tactical design and conduct of Tuesday's battle, one knows not which to admire the more, the work of the French "370's" and "400's" in demolishing the Hun caverns, or the marvellous élan of the infantry. Never have so many prisoners been taken on so narrow a front of attack.

Having completed their occupation of Oesel and the adjacent isles and compelled Admiral Bakhireff's obsolescent squadrons, unsupported by the Russian Dreadnoughts and assisted by only one (British) submarine, to withdraw from the Moon Sound to the Gulf of Finland, the Germans have now established a bridgehead on the Esthonian mainland, at the Verder peninsula, midway between Hapsal and Pernau. Nor is there much to prevent them from securing other landing stages, prior to a move against both these minor ports and railheads or against Reval itself. Especially ominous is the report that horses are being disembarked wholesale from barges, which would seem to indicate that a cavalry raid is in contemplation. If this be so, Schmettino, whose presence on the Dvina was advertised but recently, will doubtless be placed in charge of the operation. General Alexieff's blunt refusal to represent what he described as a non-fighting army at the coming Allied Conference is natural enough; but it does not make for hopefulness!

It was well known that the German General Staff, in response to frantic appeals by their Hapsburg colleagues, had reluctantly consented to supplement with German aid the aerial service and long-range artillery of their Allies on the Isonzo front. But the news that Bavaria's crack Alpine corps, until recently in Rumania, is participating in an Austro-German offensive in Cadore is significant indeed, as showing the extent to which Germany's liabilities towards her partners have latterly increased, and this at the most awkward

of times. The scope of the attack is still undisclosed, and must needs be curtailed by the advent of the cold season. It would be interesting to learn whether a big German general is in command. Mackensen has been strangely quiescent in Moldavia, and Falkenhayn, if he be still in Asia Minor, has allowed himself again to be outwitted by General Maude, who has repeated on the Diala his recent *manœuvre* on the Euphrates, and pushed his right wing close up to Khanikin. There is now plenty of elbow room for our defence of Baghdad or for an offensive against the Turk, if either Allenby or Baratoff is ready.

General Pétain's brilliant success on Tuesday, following a week's bombardment on the Aisne front, is of much more than local importance. The capture of seventy guns and some 8,000 prisoners; the swelling of the enemy casualty list by fully three times that number; the redemption of more French territory; these are but valuable accidentals to a victory of far wider significance. For four months the region of Laffaux has been the scene of repeated German efforts to dislodge the French from the threatening positions they won in the spring. The heights from which the enemy was driven this week were (as his costly and persistent attacks have testified) as vital to his hold on the Laon plain as the Passchendaele Ridge to his hold on Flanders. The enemy defences, based on a quarry system of caves and tunnels, were as powerful as nature, reinforced by the highest military resource, could make them.

Yet to-day our Allies overlook the Laon plain, having rammed several bitter lessons down the German throat. For instance, that the exhausted French still have power to deal effectively with the invincible armies of the Fatherland. That the most impregnable German positions are not proof against the weight of the Allied artillery and the fighting spirit of their infantry. That despite ample warning of an impending blow, Hindenburg is powerless to hold positions vital to the "Hindenburg line." Even the inactivity of his Eastern armies can evidently not compensate him for the wastage of his reserves in Flanders.

The unpleasant news of the week has been the sinking of nine neutral merchantmen and their British escort of two destroyers by a couple of improved *Moewes*. Whether the convoy was of such value as to warrant the employment of a cruiser escort is an open question. But the failure of our regular North Sea Patrols to intercept the raiders suggests a serious lack of enterprise, if not of vigilance. Nor is the fact that an enemy torpedo-boat flotilla was able to bombard Dunkirk without incurring any punishment reassuring. Surely, with the American and other Allied naval contingents now at our disposal, there should always be available and ready a force capable of dealing with any German ventures against our own or the French Channel ports.

No sentences in the Prime Minister's speech at the Albert Hall evoked such thunderous cheers as the determination "to settle this controversy once and for all," and to so settle it that "brute force shall be dethroned for ever." Few things are more pathetic than the invincible belief of men in finality. It is more in the nature of hope than belief, for the wish is father to the thought. No terms, the most favourable that a triumphant Entente could wring from the Central Empires, would dethrone brute force for ever, or protect our children and grandchildren from the horrors of war. In human affairs there are no such things as "once for all" and "never." Brute force will only be dethroned when men cease to be men, and women cease to be women.

That is why we attach less importance to the precise terms of peace than most people. It is for moral rather than physical reasons that Germany must not be al-

lowed to profit, however remotely, by this war. It is possible to ruin Germany's prestige; indeed, that has been done already. It is not possible by any arrangements, political or military or geographical, to prevent the children or grandchildren of the present Germans from making another war seventy or a hundred years hence. Suppose that the utmost terms of the Entente are obtained, either as the result of a decisive victory by land or sea, or as the result of exhaustion. Suppose Alsace-Lorraine restored to France, Belgium freed and rehabilitated, Italy satisfied by the Trentino and Trieste, Serbia and Roumania and the Balkan Slavs settled comfortably, Constantinople internationalised, and Mesopotamia peacefully developed—suppose even that the abdication of the Kaiser and his son have been enforced. When you have done all these things, you have not secured your posterity against the possibility of war.

The republics of Greece, the republic of Rome, the mediæval republics of Italy, were always at war. The twenty years' war with Bonaparte and the settlement of 1815 have been invoked as precedents to nerve our arm to "the crushing of Prussian Militarism." History is not the strong point of the Prime Minister or Mr. Bonar Law. Napoleon was supposed to have utterly crushed Prussia after Jena by the limitation of her armaments. Within seven years Prussia was helping Britain and Russia to crush Bonaparte at Waterloo. The treaty of Vienna is cited as having settled Europe for a hundred years in 1815. Within fifteen years the union of Holland with Belgium was undone and reversed. Within forty years France, supposed to be crushed at Waterloo, was fighting with England against Russia. France once more supposed to be crushed in 1870 by Germany, is within fifty years fighting with England and Italy against Germany.

It is impossible to insure against war. You cannot dethrone brute force by brute force—and military victory is nothing else—but the risks of war may be diminished by physical precautions, and they may be much diminished by changing the minds of men. Because you cannot eliminate suddenly the burglarious instinct from the human breast is no reason why you should not guard your house by bolts and pay a police force. From this point of view the centre of gravity of British policy (as of German policy pointed out by Von Tirpitz) is Belgium. We presume it is permissible for Great Britain to look after her own interests in this war as well as the interests of her Allies. Selfishly speaking, England is not interested in the restoration of Alsace-Lorraine, or in the Trentino, or in the Balkans. But England is vitally interested in the security of Belgian independence, which can only be safeguarded by the incorporation of the left or south-west bank of the Scheldt with Belgium.

The best security against future war is the change in the minds of men, which is brought about, not by military victories, but by the march of events, that moves forward stealthily and unperceived like a glacier bearing on its bosom the camps and flags of political parties. Speeches, newspapers, books, general elections, do not make the glacier move, though they indicate that men are not wholly unconscious of its progress. Whatever the terms of peace, there will be no war in Europe for another seventy or a hundred years. After that lapse of time there will not be a king or an emperor left in the world. That in itself will not be a guarantee of peace. But our grandchildren will look on peace and war with different eyes from ours: and how they will look on it not even the wisest living can tell.

What precise place in the scheme of Russian anarchy may be occupied by the Preliminary Parliament we do not pretend to know. So much in Russian politics has been preliminary during the last six months, the sequel

generally being robbery or bloodshed! But we read in the papers that M. Kerenski having opened the Preliminary Parliament with a speech, which accurately described the dangers without hinting at a remedy, offered the Presidential Chair to "the Grandmother of the Russian Revolution," Madame Breshkovskaya. The House of Commons has often been called the Mother of Parliaments; but it never thought of seating a grandmother in the Speaker's chair. However, we dare say that Grandmother Breshkovskaya is no worse than Speaker Lowther, for

"Nine times out of ten  
Old women are just  
As good as old men."

The extraordinary power of suggestion by the Press and the cinematograph is exemplified in Petrograd and other Russian towns to-day. It is agreed by those who have lately returned from Russia that the kind of religious veneration for the Tsar as the Little Father has been replaced by hatred and contempt. This is due to the anarchist Press, and still more to the popular films, which represent the young daughters of the ex-Tsar seated on Rasputin's knee, while their father stares drunkenly at their endearments. Great, indeed, is the power of the cinematograph! Mr. Winston Churchill has realised this new source of influence, for he is spending money on German spy films. This is the way in which the half-educated opinion of the public in a modern State is lured by suggestion to think as the politician wishes.

There was a crucial moment in the Russian revolution when courage and decision on the part of the Entente Powers, particularly of Great Britain, might have saved Russia from the horrors that followed, and Europe from the danger. When the Tsar had abdicated and refused the throne for his son, his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, was accepted by the Kerenski negotiators as the Tsar. With rare tact and foresight, the Grand Duke Michael attached to his consent the condition that he should be accepted by the nation. That was the moment when the Entente Powers should have intervened, and, by their representatives, insisted on the crowning of the Grand Duke Michael as a constitutional Tsar. The golden hour passed; the Entente ambassadors did nothing; and when the Kerenski negotiators returned with the Grand Duke Michael's offer, it was too late. The Soviet was already beginning to feel its power, and refused all suggestions except their own republic.

Kerenski is emphatically not a companion whom one would choose as a companion for a tiger-hunt. If there is one thing perfectly well known to those who have real information, it is that Kerenski invited General Korniloff to move on Petrograd, to take the government out of the hands of the Soviet, and then to divide supreme power with Kerenski. The plot was discovered by the Soviet (the ruling committee is largely composed of spies who know the game), the army failed to back up Korniloff, and Kerenski then turned round and denounced his fellow-conspirator as a traitor to the Republic. That is the usual way in which such plots end. Russia can only be saved by getting rid of the Soviet, neck and crop. There can be no discipline in the army as long as there are regimental committees.

There are a few facts about Russia which it is well to keep in mind. There is no struggle between proletariat and capitalists, for there are no capitalists, except a few English companies, and one or two bankers and financiers in Petrograd. There is no war between landlords and peasants, for only a tenth of the enormous acreage of Russia is held by private owners. Eighty-five per cent. of the Russian population are illiterate. Before the war, Russia was a huge Socialistic democracy, ruled by an absolute monarch and a highly centralised bureaucracy; and that is the only

form of government which can rule Russia in its present stage of development. In place of the Tsar and his centralised bureaucracy and his military and naval officers, the revolution has enthroned the Soviet, a mob of two thousand illiterate agitators, loafers, journalists, criminals, and peasants. This mob is managed by about a hundred International anarchists, German spies, and a few sincere enthusiasts.

More than half a century ago Disraeli pointed out that their cruel and contemptuous treatment by the European Powers had driven the Jews into the formation of Secret Societies, which were undermining the old order of things. It is even truer to-day than when 'Coningsby' was written. Kerenski, who before the war was a Geneva Internationalist, is a half-Jew, and to-day the ruler of Russia. The people by whom he is surrounded are the regular type of Secret Society Jews. Kerenski is living in the Tsar's winter-palace at Petrograd, "sprawling on the down of usurped pomp," as Burke said of the Regicide Directory. The Tsar and his family are living in a small house in a Siberian village, with plenty of servants and food, and only complaining of being stared at by the villagers.

The best opinion seems to be that the Germans will not risk an advance to Petrograd with the winter coming on, owing to the question of food. More embarrassing than the disorganisation of transport, the Russian peasants have taken to burying their wheat in pits and silos, until the price rises in proportion to the cost of other commodities. Besides the victualling of their own troops, the Germans would have a million and a half Petrogradites on their hands: not that the Germans would mind letting them starve, but they would be no use untrained in producing food and munitions. The Germans and Austrians will probably confine themselves to invading the southern Russian provinces. Nor is there apparently any fear of a separate peace with Germany. Who is to sign it? Kerensky? He would be afraid to sign a peace: and even the Kaiser would shy at a treaty signed by the Soviet.

A Reform Bill for the enfranchisement of ten or twelve million voters of both sexes is the greatest political revolution ever effected in this or any other modern country. It excites so little interest that the report of the debates in Committee occupies a few lines in the *Times*, and is so compressed that the public cannot understand what has been done. The vote is to be given to women of thirty, but they are not to be required to state what their age is. The registration officer, a county council official, may, if he thinks it necessary before putting a woman on the register, require her to produce a certificate of birth, or, if that is not convenient, to make a statutory declaration that she has attained the required age. But as it will be the duty of the registration officers to make up the lists of voters, and as there will be millions of female voters, how can he possibly know anything about their ages?

Is it again to be left to the registration agents of the different political parties to object to the qualifications of the voters on the lists? It is argued that male voters are required to be 21 years old, and that no difficulty has ever arisen about their age. But, under the old system, the voters were occupiers or lodgers, who could not have made a contract of occupation or lodging unless they were of age. Now that bare residence is the qualification, what check will there be on the polling of both boys and girls under age? It may be said that boys and girls will not take enough interest in politics to go to the poll. But the wire-pullers and party agents will look to that, and we may expect to see herds of boys and girls driven to the polls by the shepherds of the caucus. If the polling officers are empowered or compelled to inquire the ages of the female voters they will have a lively time of it.



Mr. Joynson-Hicks is not popular in the House of Commons, partly because he is regarded as a disappointed aspirant to office, and partly because his manner suggests an inaccurate estimate of his ability. There were, therefore, few members, even in his own party, who did not enjoy his castigation by Mr. Bonar Law on Monday during the Air-raid debate. Can Admiral Sir Hedworth Meux be right in saying that our barrage fire is of no more use in keeping off Zeppelins and aircraft than the beating of gongs by the Chinese to keep off an eclipse of the moon? If that is true, we agree with the Admiral that the barrage fire had better be discontinued, for it is the noise of the guns more than the explosion of the shells that causes the mental and physical disorders.

Perhaps Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Chamberlain did well to be angry with the fuss over Friday's silent raid, though it was largely due to the small amount of information provided by the official reports. The debate was not dignified; it was certain to delight the Germans; but, all the same, it was very natural. Ministers have brought these attacks upon themselves by a little too much boasting about our supremacy in the air. It is all very well for Mr. Bonar Law to tell us that our airmen have dropped 8,000 bombs behind the German lines in Flanders, while the Germans have only dropped 800 bombs behind the British lines. The inhabitant of London, or Lowestoft, or Deal does not see these things; he has no imagination; he does not know what 800 or 8,000 bombs mean. What he does know and see is that German bombs are dropped in the midst of his town or village, that his own or his neighbour's house is wrecked before his eyes, and that many people are killed and more mutilated. What we still want to know is why some of those 8,000 bombs have not been dropped on Cologne, Hamburg, Mayence, or Frankfurt?

As we predicted last week, the Liberals are making a dead set at the proposed royalty of 9d. a ton to be paid to the owners of land under which petroleum may be found. The leader of this band of confiscators is now Mr. Herbert Samuel, who asks *à haute voix*. What should be the relations of the State towards the national resources of the country? Why, asks Mr. Samuel, should the State pay anything to the owner when the whole venture may turn out a loss? We do not quite follow this, unless it be meant that after boring on a man's land and not finding an anticline, you are to leave the owner, with the boreholes, his land damaged, and no cash. Perhaps Mr. Samuel (whose family has not done badly out of oil) means that the owner should be forced to make the boreholes, and if "a spouter" is struck, should get none of the profit. Swift said that landed property was like a clock on the outside of a house, of use to everybody except the owner. That is clearly the Socialists' view.

The result of the Islington election cannot be encouraging to the new "National Party." The triple issue before the constituency was: Will you have Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Pemberton Billing, or Brigadier-General Page Croft? To such a depth of futility have politics in this country been reduced by a Coalition Government! The weakness of the National Party is that it has no Man to lead it. If a statesman of genius, with an unblemished public record, of assured social position, unsmirched by any of the scandals of recent years, were to arise and put himself at the head of the National Party, he would sweep the Coalition and all its satellites before him like chaff before the wind. Unfortunately the man of genius is not there. The twentieth century has not yet found its Chatham or its Beaconsfield. Perhaps he is even now snoring in a dug-out, or slithering about in the Flanders mud.

#### THE NAVY THAT WAITS.

LAST Sunday was the anniversary of Trafalgar. With a fine disregard for actual events, attempts were made to celebrate it in the usual flamboyant fashion. Banquets were held and "eminent public men" delivered speeches, or wrote letters, extolling the British Navy, and exulting in the fresh evidence of its power furnished by the present war. Some of the newspapers, and the "naval correspondents," also emitted rhetoric upon the "silent shield" and the immortal memory of Nelson. It all seems remarkably inappropriate at the present juncture. If you stood in Trafalgar Square on Saturday, you will see the column festooned with streamers, and decked out with garlands and wreaths, in celebration of the great victory of our fathers; but your agreeable reflections on this subject were apt to be interrupted by newsboys offering the evening paper with the information that two British destroyers had been sunk in the North Sea by German cruisers. It is not an announcement that tempts the reasonable person to swagger about Britannia ruling the waves.

The plain truth is that this commemoration fell at the end of a week of failure and humiliation. On the Friday the Germans, punctual to time, brought off another raid upon these islands, and several millions of Londoners were gloomily lurking in their basements and cellarages or seeking safety in the tubes and tunnels. In this, the fourth year of the war, which we are supposed to be winning, on the eve of that imminent collapse of the enemy which we are being encouraged to expect, the Germans can keep the inhabitants of our capital skulking like rats, as Mr. Churchill would say, in their holes and hiding-places, while their own towns and villages are comfortable and safe. That is bad enough; worse still, that the invaders—for, of course, this is invasion—were unchecked and unpunished by our own defensive forces. They came and went with perfect freedom and impunity, stayed as long as they liked, threw as many or few bombs as suited them, and sailed away unhurt. The shattering of a whole row of shop-fronts in the very heart of our city, and the destruction of a number of small houses elsewhere, are not a trifle; nor is the death of 34 persons and the maiming of 50 or 60 more. For reasons best known to themselves, the raiders only dropped two or three bombs. With these they killed or injured some 80 people. If they had been more lavish with their projectiles they might have caused hundreds or thousands of casualties and destroyed whole streets. There is no reason why they should not do this next time they perform the apparently very easy operation known as "penetrating the London air defences."

It is true the same Zeppelins will not appear among us again—thanks to the French. All our gratitude is due to our gallant Allies for the great service they have performed to the common cause by inflicting this heavy aerial defeat upon the enemy; but, in spite of the complacent apologetics of Mr. Bonar Law and the Home Secretary, it is impossible not to feel the humiliation of the contrast between the impunity of the raiders while perambulating England and the swift doom which fell upon them when they showed themselves in France. The manner in which the French airmen and air-gunners caught hold of the airships the moment they appeared, clung to them remorselessly, and hunted them all over France until they brought down four, and compelled two or three others to put to sea in a disabled condition, is significantly different from the feebleness and hesitation which have marked our own handling of the invading squadrons. In a few hours the French disabled as many airships as the whole number which have fallen to us during the thirty months or so in which fleets of Zeppelins have been cruising at their ease over a large part of these islands. This is not likely to enhance our prestige, either with the enemy or our Allies. The American newspapers have been saying that in air-fighting the French are

first, the Germans second, the Italians third, and the British a bad fourth. The events of the last week may confirm them in this unflattering opinion; nor do indications point to the vigour and system needed to meet the tremendous air offensive for which Germany is known to be preparing in the coming year.

As to the naval situation, it continues to fill reasonable persons with perplexity and alarm. We are promised an Admiralty enquiry into the causes of the disaster to the North Sea convoy; but what is really wanted is an enquiry into the conduct of the Admiralty our immense margin of maritime force and with two-thirds of the German Navy actively engaged in the Baltic, we are unable to protect the short line of communication between the coasts of Norway and Britain. Why is it that German raiders should be able to run amuck among a merchant fleet under British guard, almost within hail of our own territorial waters? Even if they could succeed in their sudden *coup*, one would have supposed that they would have been swiftly followed up and cut off before they could get home to their base. The Germans are naturally jubilant over the affair, and we cannot blame them. "What is the British Fleet doing?" asks the *Cologne Gazette*. It is a legitimate question, and, as our readers know, we have had to ask it ourselves. What is the British Navy doing? With an overwhelming service of battleships and battle-cruisers to our credit we cannot apparently move a hand to interfere with the German operations in the Baltic, and we cannot even police our home waters. Why should the enemy have been permitted to carry out the landing of an army corps in the Gulf of Riga without any effective attempt on our part to impede its proceedings? Many of us have thought that if the "Nelson touch" still prevailed in the Navy, our armoured ships would have fought their way into the Baltic long ago; but even if that be impossible (and almost every difficult or hazardous enterprise is regarded as impossible by the Admiralty nowadays), we might at least have made potent use of our submarines. One of these craft does seem to have been in the Baltic, and it made an abortive effort to destroy a German Dreadnought. But why only one British submarine? We should have thought a whole squadron could have been there, buzzing about the German battleships and transports, and giving real support to the Russian squadron. Again we must ask why no attempt is made by the Navy to lend a hand in the terrific and sanguinary struggle General Haig is carrying on in Flanders. If the German fleet can land an army in the Baltic, is it impossible for our fleet to disembark troops and seize the harbours on the Belgian coast? It would be difficult and dangerous, no doubt; but are all the hardships and perils to be left to our sorely-tried soldiers, while our three hundred million pounds' worth of battleships are kept in cotton-wool till the war is done?

The most active department at Whitehall seems to be the literary one. The Admiralty's Publicity Expert is very busy. In the official announcement of the convoy disaster little was told us about the details of the fight, and that in an exceedingly confused fashion; but there were several sentences of righteous indignation upon the brutality of the Germans and their iniquitous disregard of "the historic chivalry of the sea." A day or two afterwards the newspapers were regaled with a lengthy account of the attacks of our airships and patrols on certain U-boats. "The submarine saw her coming and dived, but too late to avoid the glittering Nemesis from the skies." We do not require this sort of journalistic embroidery from the Admiralty, nor do we stand in any need of sermons on the wickedness of the enemy. It is not the business of the Admiralty to inveigh against the German crimes, but to prevent their commission. We could do without the rhetoric, as well as the apologetics, of Whitehall. What we ask is that the Allied navies, under the leadership of the British Admiralty, should make full

use of their unprecedented superiority in power and numbers. But that will not be done, nor is it likely to be done, while the direction of the mighty armament rests with elderly officers who are afraid to run risks, and have not the capacity to evolve a bold and definite strategy, or to seize their opportunities with daring and decision.

## THE IRISH DEBATE.

POLITICAL wisdom seems to have deserted the leaders of the Irish Nationalist party. The shock of war appears to have bereft them of that power of astute calculation which guided, or, rather, dragged Mr. Asquith and his majority to the passing of the Home Rule Act. Or it may be that they were spoiled by the over-indulgence of Mr. Asquith and the Radical Socialists. When the war broke out, the obvious policy of Messrs. Redmond and Dillon was to pay for the Home Rule Act, and to prove that they were fitted to receive it, by throwing themselves and Ireland whole-heartedly into the war, and sharing its burthens and obligations. Instead of doing so, the Nationalist leaders objected to the extension of the Military Service Act to Ireland, and though Major William Redmond was a brilliant example of individual chivalry, the recruiting in Nationalist Ireland was miserable. It was a fatal blunder, and deprived the Nationalists of the support of the British Liberals. When a statesman makes a capital error, he very often loses his head, and in his feverish anxiety to recover a lost position only makes his isolation patent to the world. What on earth made Mr. Redmond provoke a debate on Irish government at this moment? Did he think that he would win the British Liberals back by attacking Mr. Duke? Did he imagine that he could disarm the hostility of the Sinn Feiners? Or did he flatter himself that he could rehabilitate the old Nationalist Party? He must have lost all his political tact if he cherished any of these illusions. All that Mr. Redmond has got by his motion of censure on the Irish government is to prove to the world by the damning evidence of the division list that he is abandoned by all parties in Parliament, except the 78 Nationalists who, as Mr. O'Brien said, and everybody knows, no longer represent the majority of the Irish people.

We do not believe there is another country in the world that, in the middle of a war like the present, could or would devote a whole evening of solemn full-dress debate to the discussion of the domestic administration of a corner of its empire, with fewer inhabitants than London. The *Times*, which gave a dozen lines the night before to the discussion of a Franchise Bill which will settle the destinies of the Empire for the next generation, devoted as many columns to a verbatim report of the Irish debate. But the *Times* was wrong: nobody will read those columns, because everybody feels that the debate was a sham, and was insincere from start to finish. The situation in Ireland is painfully clear, if it were the habit of our politicians and our newspapers to state things as they are. Ireland is divided into two parties; the Loyalists, congregated in the eastern counties of Ulster, and dispersed throughout the rest of Ireland, are confronted by the Sinn Feiners, who are for an independent Irish republic. There is, of course, a remnant of the old Nationalist Party to be found everywhere; but between the millstones of the Loyalists and the Sinn Feiners it will be ground to powder. Whether the Sinn Feiners are in earnest, or whether they are merely combined by weariness and disgust of the old gang of politicians, it is impossible to say. Matthew Arnold wrote that the Celt was always in a state of passionate revolt against facts. In politics we cannot penetrate men's hearts: we must judge them by their deeds. In view of the Casement rebellion we are bound, for our own safety, to assume that the Sinn



Feiners are in earnest when they demand an independent republic. What follows? Should there be a general election before the Convention has agreed upon a plan of Home Rule, or before that plan can be embodied in an Act of Parliament, the Sinn Feiners will replace nearly all Mr. Redmond's present followers at Westminster. If, on the other hand, the Convention produces a practicable form of Home Rule, and an election takes place in Ireland under its provisions, the Sinn Feiners will appear in a majority of the Irish Parliament. In either event, the Convention scheme will be repudiated, and the demand for an Irish Republic be advanced. This shows the folly of trying to settle Home Rule whilst the war is going on. The Prime Minister told the Sinn Feiners plainly enough that they would never get their independent republic. It would have been far wiser if Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George had met the Casement rebellion by a declaration that so long as the war lasted there should be no discussion of the system of Irish government, and that, in the meantime, all Irishmen must share with Britons the burthens and dangers of war. By this policy the more dangerous rebels would have been drafted into the Army, where they would have made excellent soldiers; and the British Parliament would have been spared futile debates, which only distract its attention from the conduct of the war, and which can only issue in a fresh and humiliating deadlock.

## II.—REFORM OF PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION.

BY THE MASTER OF DOWNING COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

THE layman who criticises the Public School system of education is apt to overlook difficulties of which he has had no experience and to base his criticisms on methods of teaching which have long been superseded. Schoolmasters are alive to the importance of doing their utmost in the great work of reconstruction, and it is of little assistance to them to be told that present methods are unsatisfactory unless fault-finding is accompanied by suggestions.

The aim of the schoolmaster is to educate those under his charge so that they may be prepared for the duties of citizenship in the broadest sense, and to endeavour, by avoiding premature specialisation, to discover individual preferences and aptitudes. Boys and girls represent innumerable types which, though capable of being modified by external forces, are fundamentally distinct, and it is only by giving to all equal opportunities that it is possible to discover to what particular stimulus each most naturally reacts. Many boys pass through a Public School without acquiring any real appreciation of literature or the power of expressing themselves in reasonably good English, and many leave school without having learnt anything of the natural sciences. To deal in the first place with the teaching of science: it is not the desire of the majority of scientific men to deprive boys of the opportunity of becoming classical scholars, nor is it desired to compel schoolmasters to teach science by making it a compulsory subject in University entrance examinations. The important point is that all the boys in a school should not only be taught elementary science but that they should be introduced to science in its wider aspects. A master who insists on every boy knowing something of elementary physical or biological science plays a useful part, but there is another and more stimulating kind of teaching that is frequently overlooked. The elements of a subject are necessarily in a greater or less degree unattractive, and as a rule it is only a few who really enjoy the lesson. The class includes many boys who would never become practical men of science, but have other tastes and potentialities. The aim of the teacher

should not be restricted to imparting elementary information as a groundwork for more advanced teaching; he should endeavour even in the early stages of his work to awaken the interest of his pupils in the methods and achievements of scientific investigation. Beyond the dullness of laws and formulæ there are the wonderful problems of life and of the inorganic world, the fascinating histories of scientific discoveries demonstrating the intimate connection between pure and applied science, and the lives of scientific men illustrating the humanising influence of a whole-hearted devotion, at least in many notable instances, to the advancement of natural knowledge. The neglect of science does not only mean a lamentable ignorance of the elements of physical and biological phenomena; it means also a fatal lack of appreciation of the importance of scientific research as a factor in national progress. It is of little use to tell the beginner that a thorough grounding in detail is essential. Much of our teaching both in schools and universities is rendered sterile by excessive attention to detail. We should aim primarily at awakening interest, explaining by concrete examples why certain facts are important and illustrating, by following the course of discoveries the importance of which is apparent to all, the practical bearing of pure science and the scientific point of view upon social and industrial problems. "It is not," as Fitzgerald wrote, "the poetical imagination, but bare science that every day more and more unrolls a greater epic than the Iliad, the history of the world, the infinitude of space and time."

The ignorance of many undergraduates, not only students of science, of English literature and of the art of composition, suggests that more attention should be paid to these subjects. It is not surprising that a boy fresh from school has not read widely; the disconcerting fact is that literature lessons have failed to give him the desire to read. One reason for this failure may be that the lessons have been too formal and academic. As in teaching science, so also in the teaching of English literature, the tedium of laboriously surmounting initial difficulties should be relieved by the less formal and more conversational method. There is no reason why a proportion of the time now devoted to the ordinary routine of class-work should not be spent by the master in reading aloud English literature and by comments and criticisms familiarising his pupils with the qualities which make good writing. Such informal readings and discussions should not be concerned with books set for examination but authors should be chosen whose works are likely to arouse enthusiasm and create a sense of appreciation of style and orderly narrative. From time to time articles in the better type of newspaper might be made the text of talks on important topics which would bring home to boys the realities of life and lead them to take an intelligent interest in social and economic questions. If boys were encouraged to write accounts of events or scenes which have excited their interest, or to give the results of natural history or other observations made in their free time, instead of writing essays on subjects chosen by the master, it would be easier to create a desire to learn how best to express their thoughts or impressions. They would feel that they were creating something of their own and not merely performing a task. If masters and boys were associated in outdoor excursions as well as in the playing field and together discovered new facts, a bond would be established which would encourage a habit of asking questions. The system of excursions and the greater freedom in the use of leisure adopted in some schools have proved successful, and the lessons thus unconsciously learnt are of the greatest value. The Public School boy lives in a self-contained and self-centred world, and though the training undoubtedly develops excellent qualities, it fails in many instances to produce an inquisitive habit of mind and leaves the boy inadequately prepared for the more serious problems of life. "The one real object of education is to leave a man in the condition of continually asking questions." This sound view,

expressed by the late Bishop Creighton, should be kept prominently before schoolmasters in their deliberations how to reform the present system. The difficulty of adding to a curriculum already full enough is often exaggerated, since much can be done in the direction of giving greater scope to self-education by some curtailment of the time devoted to athletics. Games bulk too largely in the business of most Public Schools, not only because of the time they occupy, but because of the dominant position they assume in the thoughts and conversation of both masters and boys.

A. C. SEWARD.

### THE BOOKSELLER'S DAUGHTER.

WE lived over the shop, the church alley behind us, the door of another church in front, the peace of ages around us. Old squared flint walls and gabled leucombs made up the world our neighbours knew; ours was a universe wider than they could dream it. Like Disraeli, I was born in a library, though mine was but an old-fashioned shop, lined with second-hand books, books in rows, books upon the desk and table—not in piles, my father was too practical for that. His flatterers, he called the books, all trying to do him pleasure. Among them sat my father, with square bronze beard and violet eyes, his snowy linen, of which I had the care, set off by the bird's eye fogel, the blue scarf with white spots which he wore knotted round his neck—a shopkeeper, but a scholar, recognised as such by every gentle spirit that drove in on market days and came to have a mardle with Ben, as half the ancient city called him, look over his stock, and take home into the country a prize for Sunday leisure.

When the shop was shut our joys began. After supper my father would carry his dessert, from the parlour behind, into the shop, loving to hear the blue Nankin bowl sing the Hymn to Autumn, with its melody of colour, an orange, a Ribstone pippin, the purple of a dried biffin, set off by the flaming gold of a leaf or two. Or he would have his Wedgwood plate, cream-tinted with green vine leaf trail, and, on it, walnuts, which he cracked, two together, in his hands, for he had his theories of old-fashioned manners—this was one of them; so was the eating of a herring with two forks, never a knife; and these ways he impressed on my notice. Pride in the City of Cotman made water-colours his hobby; otherwise our interests were of the past, whether in books or life.

Every Easter we imagined ourselves off to Rome in the etchings of Titan Piranesi, whom I pictured, as his statue shows him, in a toga. We explored the Forum, cast our coin into his Fountain of Trevi; followed Horace and the bore along the Sacred Way right to the temple of Vesta; visited the Temple of the Sibyl at Tivoli, pretending that Rome had grown over-hot; or lived through centuries absorbed in wonder on temple steps at Paestum, and heard a goatherd piping, Theocritus-like, among the fallen columns. In old winter we travelled in Fairlyand with Dicky Doyle; or we were away on the stroke of eight, when the horn blew ton, ton, tavon, to call us, Jacobean for the nonce, to the chase in Blome's 'Gentleman's Recreation,' followed it all day, and left it only when the recheat blew farewell and good-night to the good company; we fought with Greeks or Trojans in the folios of Flaxman, or studied Georgian fashions and furniture, life and manners in the plates of Ackerman's 'Repository,' still containing the original pieces of faded patterns in the pages of British manufactures. Strutt's 'Sports and Pastimes' was an early joy. Tilt-ing at the ring and in the boat, hoodman blind, frog in the middle, hot cockles—I loved them all. Or we would have an evening with the Gentle Craft. "Father, read me the fishes," would summon Walton and Stradanus or the Picture of Dolphins in our native

'Vulgar Errors'—did not Sir Thomas Browne live in the next parish, does he not lie hard by in St. Peter Mancroft?—and I would hear for the tenth time from his pages how the Dolphins of Tarus and Fulus do make another flexure from that of Commodus and Agrippa, and wonder whether his story of the Remora be not unreasonably amplified.

When I was six years old my father asked me what I wanted for a birthday present. What unusual wakefulness possessed him to remember the event I never knew, but remember he did, and his answer to my wanting the oldest book we possessed was the harder to bear because his act of memory was so unlooked-for. "The oldest book I have is the 'Fierabras' of 1485"—one of our infrequent prizes—"and, little one, it's worth a deal o' money, a deal o' money, mark you; more than I can afford. So, would a book 'in the fifteens'—my name for the sixteenth century—"suit us, Rosetta?" "That's nearly as old as the fourteens," was my answer, as he consoled me with a vellum-bound 'Livy' of 1535, which I treasured, ignorant of the evil to come, when I should be puzzling out my 'Valpy' and construing my Virgil in the back parlour after the shop was shut and hunters for bargains had been warded off.

Of a Sunday we had our walk through the Close, over the Norman bridge and up by Lollards' Pit, which I passed like Dante, with gaze averted, lest I should see the vision of martyred bones which I had conjured up and, child-like, kept to myself, to shudder over in the dark; on to Crome's Mousehold Heath, Monk's Wold, named from St. Leonard's Priory close by. Mussei, my father called it—and he would tell me how he had stood there in days gone by with friends of Jasper Petulengro, looking down over the old city, to feel the 'Wind on the Heath' and quote and re-quote the gipsy's philosophy of the universe of freedom and the sweetness of life.

I had never been to school. Lessons, such as childhood knows them, had come from Miss Unity Fotheringham, the prim little lady from the gabled house over the way. She wore a wig that I was not supposed to notice, and imparted her Doctor Brewer's 'Guide to Knowledge.' But what was this shadowy learning compared with lessons o' love with my father over his pipe of an evening, when parcels had gone and work was over for the day?

Once, and only once, I looked at a Naughty Book, one of the few put on a shelf apart as not for me. It was Pierce Egan's 'Life in London,' and Corinthian Kate dancing with young Tom to the strains of Jerry's high-backed piano filled me with delight. She wore a dress like those I loved in the 'Repository,' high-waisted, sensibly short, and of the satin that I so longed for. The ladies in those plates were adorable; still, they had no names, and were useless therefore as heroines; but Corinthian Kate was real, at least, and the incautious desire to look like her told my father what had happened. I had my hero out of the 'Repository,' Andreas Hofer, with green plumed hat, embroidered belt stuck with pistols, bared throat, and curly black beard, the very image of an amiable giaour, and a faint incongruous vision of Kate with him as her companion remained in my memory. But I never took down a Naughty Book again.

I was fourteen when my father let me catalogue a book; it was the proudest moment of my life. Grown up at last, I could help him in his work; I would prove myself, and show that not for nothing had I made friends of his stock, caressing in my mind the catalogued titles as I had stroked and petted the originals. It was an easy book, one of the many works, 'Builder's Benchmate,' 'Treasury,' or the like, by Batty Langley, gardener, designer, and, with Horry Walpole, creator of the worst "Gothick" beheld by mortal man. But I had set down the date in Arabic figures when the original had Roman; I had not divided the lines to show the spacing of the title; I



had left out the capitals of my nouns and the number of plates in the book; morocco was miscalled calf, and quarto octavo. The reproof in my father's gentle eye had told me something was wrong, but he tempered justice with mercy. I wrote the title again, and wrote it right. Henceforward I was his business partner. We had no assistant, only a boy to clean the shop and, on taking the parcels home, to receive a tip which he, country bred, still called a largess, and a girl to serve the easier customers. I, Rosetta, could take my part, could examine, collate, enjoy the books which gave us our living, our learning, our delight. And it was a new enjoyment, whether I was handling old friends long in stock or others lately bought, with which last, by a strange freak of fancy, I was more intimate, because we started on the right footing from the first, whereas the old friends had known me as a child, with all faults and errors of description, and I was not sure that they sufficiently realised that I was now the young mistress.

We had our little private stock of quotations, too. Did incunabula come in, the largest was greeted with a line from Pope as de Lyra (or another) "groaned upon the shelf" in the company of his fellows in divinity; your *editio princeps* and rare romance were beyond our moderate capital, thanks to the American market, an abstraction which perplexed me as a child, and which I somehow pictured as a mediæval devil, like Norwich Snap, already gorged with prey, but gaping wide for more.

Our tutelary saint was Samuel Johnson, bookseller's son and "England's most honoured name, if personal greatness, my dear, is to count rather than literary genius, although his was loftier than it is the fashion to allow." So began the little speech in which my father toasted the Doctor every eighteenth of September. Nor did he ever fail, once in the year, to read aloud the story of Johnson's penance for the wrong done fifty years before to the dead bookseller, his father, calling up, until I seemed to see it before me, that huge figure, hewn out of rock, yet purblind and twitching, bareheaded in the rain before the unheeding world in the market-place at Uttoxeter.

Our greatest festival was Shakespeare's birthday, kept as Leigh Hunt desired it should be kept, with songs from his works and in his honour, the parlour decked with the flowers mentioned in the plays. We had no piano, and sang, unaccompanied, our Arne and Stevens "Where the bee sucks," "Sigh no more, ladies!" "Under the greenwood tree," "Thou soft-flowing Avon." And for the flowers. What anxious observations of the sky the night before, what disappointment if the rain had spoilt the blossoms (it had never hindered us, mark you, from plucking them), what indignation if untimely frosts had checked the pale primroses or violets dim in Bramerton Wood, or a too early heat had withered the last of his daffodils that did indeed take the winds of March with beauty!

One day, one primrose time, my father died. The books—our books—mocked me from their shelves; the proofs of our next catalogue, uncorrected, called for his hand, for our talk; and I had to finish them. Sunday came; I missed my father; the April sun shone out, and lit the marsh marigolds he would not see again, the winking Mary-buds gathered always for the Lowestoft bowl at our small Shakespeare feast; I had no heart for them. The books came to my help; unchanged, untouched by death, in trust for him, the love of all his life and mine. And in a flash, at that worst hour, when a kinswoman, well meaning, bade me live with her outside the Gates and sell off "all the stuff," I knew it, and faced the future because the books were our friends. As he would wish, I must correct the proofs and pack the parcels, attend the sales at houses a few miles away, where the collections of scholars and gentlemen were to be scattered because their heirs cared nothing for them, even for the dead owners' sake. And was I to rank myself with these,

to desert the craft we both had loved, and make my inexperience excuse for cowardice?

A step sounded in the shop—a London dealer after bargains come to make an offer for the stock and to proffer his interested sympathy. Then and there I told him that I should carry on my father's trade—and showed the proofs of the newly-finished catalogue. In sly revenge, before permitting his withdrawal, I forced him to buy a complete set of the works of Mr. W. E. Gladstone. He went, and I sat down to my colophon, the statement, written with pride and sorrow, that I—the bookseller's daughter—was now myself a bookseller, that my father's name should not pass from the place while I could keep it there, or his honoured craft, to which we owed our happiness, our modest plenty, be lost to the ancient city he loved.

But with increasing business I find I want a partner.

### SOLDIERS' PORTRAITS.

OUR warriors are not lucky in their portraits. Few civilians nowadays take up the time of painters, whose every sitting is booked for Army men. The results of these sittings are fairly represented and liberally bestowed in the present show of the Royal Society of Portrait Painters at the Grafton Gallery. It is true that the two big guns of this exhibition, Messrs. J. Shannon and Lavery, have confined their talents to women's portraits, and there is no reason to deplore this if we may judge their unlikelihood to paint anything crisp and vital from the languid, sloppy technique and conventional charm of their performances. As it happens the misfortune of our warriors, in respect of their portraits, is rooted in just these qualities of craftsmanship and mental attitude. Taking for granted in a general way the truth of the assertion that the style is the man, we have to swallow the conclusion that a sloppy technique reflects a shallow mind.

With few exceptions the exhibits at Grafton Street disclose a disheartening ideal of technique. Somebody once said that a certain evil imported from America was the price we had to pay for the blessing of cochineal. It appears that in the matter of this show, unsound drawing and painting we can comfort ourselves as thoroughly by recognising that they are, too, the price paid for an American asset—the technique of Mr. Sargent. Preoccupation with veneer, and a shoddy, pulpy veneer at that, is the main cause of the deplorable style in which the portraits we have in mind are painted. We will consider their method later. Just as a house should be built from the inside, whereby its façade would be the logical outcome of what lies behind, so the very skin of a man's hands and face, and the fold of his service tunic, should be, as it were, the total of the amounts contained. Seen with comprehension, they are but the apparent effects of organic and significant fundamentals. To the painters we are considering, however, these surface manifestations seem causeless and isolated phenomena. They splash about among them with this or that facile volubility of brushwork, but no understanding. A garrulous but uneducated talker uses words in the same way, knowing little of their derivation and inward meaning. And as such a man will vaguely fit an appropriate word to his unclarified thought, so our portrait painters hang skin masks on skullless heads, use ready-made substitutes for close and original observation and generally turn out an 'ersatz' bag of tricks. The consequence is inevitable. However else these painters have employed their time they have not spent it in gaining knowledge of the sound construction of a head. So that the very things in which they specialise—complexions, accidents of light and shade, surface textures, and the like, won't bear inspection. Naturally, of course; for as we have said, these façade aspects can be given rightly only by working outwards from their conditioning causes and circumstances. To pause no longer on this matter of



technical inefficiency we need but mention one concrete instance of this radical unsoundness. Mr. F. O. Salisbury's portrait (No. 66) is typical of the qualities we are deploring. The head is bladder-like rather than constructed on anatomical foundations. Press it and it will give, tap it and it will emit an airball's note. As for its texture, it is not that of nature's skin which lies over bone or fat or muscle, which has pores and special soap characteristics. Nor is it exactly the texture of soap, or gloy, or lard; if we must put a precise point upon it, we should say that this head of Mr. Salisbury is covered with some kind of oiled silk or varnished tussore.

An unfortunately low standard of ideal and unwillingness to seek out fundamental causes are responsible for the imperfect style of these warrior portraits. The same limitations of ideal and research paralyse their character-expression. The ideal nourished by these paintings is, if we may say so without provoking a sex war, the flapperesque. If these young soldiers can be worked up by their painters with something between Mr. Owen Nares in "Romance" (see Mr. Riviere's "Portrait" No. 24) and the little boy in Miss Montgomery's "Misunderstood," that is done. If, on the other hand, the glossy juvenile of a Daly or Gaiety piece seems a little more appropriate as a prototype, why then your subaltern is cast for that variety of the romantic. That he has thoughts and character of his own, making him an 'I' distinct from anyone else in the world, never occurs to the painter, whose job, if we understand this business aright, is to interpret on canvas just those special qualities which his trained eye and artistic mind discern. It is a betrayal of his commission, we apprehend, if the painter gives nothing more individual and unique than the tint of his sitter's hair and the high lights on his boots. As for the majority of these soldiers' portraits in the Grafton Gallery, even the casual thoughtful visitor, comparing them with the men he sees in the tubes or streets or teashops, must recognise that they are dull, inanimate recipes, mere labour-saving substitutes for the real thing. The question necessarily rises—what sort of likeness ultimately satisfies the owners of such portraits? Are they content, after they have got over their first raptures at seeing their sons look so clean and so perfectly fitted to lead the chorus of the Gaiety; after they have become used to their pride in tracing in the portrait some affinity with their stock ideal of romance? Or do they begin to ask of the picture information which it cannot give? Does the time come when they would gladly barter all its gloss and sham for some touching hint of those special queeresses, sudden flashes, subtle humours that, somehow, made their boy just what he was, unique and unrepeatable? Will they not crave something a bit more every-day and intimate, a bit less *endimanché* and photographer's studio, something characteristic of the generation that when the need came officered the New Army?

We should indeed be unfortunate if every portrait in the show was of this 'ersatz' kind. Mr. Litchfield's "Charles Stow" (19) is a conspicuous exception; this youngster certainly has an individual character. Mr. Alison's "Portrait" (4) also interprets personality with acute perception; but his rather soft and tricky modelling gives a curious false texture. Mr. Somerville's "Dr. Carpenter" is an earnest piece of character expression, as is Mr. Greiffenhagen's leathery "Sir Henry Sutton." Mr. Birley's "Mrs. Leslie" (29) has dignity and reserve—she is not posing for her picture, but occupied with her own thoughts, unaware of Mr. Birley, whose "J. W. Ross" by the way (No. 41) is a capital example of his honest versatility. Mr. Quinn's "Lieut.-Colonel J. A. Innes" is vivacious enough, but his "René Quinn" is disappointing; Mr. Quinn's portrait of a scholastic lady, in the Royal Academy, two years or so ago, set this artist an example it may be hard to live up to. Finally, we welcome Mr. Coates's "Lieut.-Colonel Bruce-Porter" (91), and Mr. Ishibashi's "Professor Kawanzoi" (105); here, at any rate, are living people.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### IRISH ANARCHY AND THE COALITION.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

45 Lexham Gardens.

22 October 1917.

SIR,—It has been a great satisfaction to many readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW beside myself to realise the increased vivacity and plain-speaking which have characterised it since the advent of its new editor.

We are tired of the iteration of the same views in nearly all the newspapers, the repetition of the same commonplaces, and the avoidance of burning topics and of precise and unmistakable statements. Above all, we are weary of the concentration of the whole energy of our Press upon the War, its horrors, its crimes, and its tragedies and of the virtual exclusion of other matters of importance that might act as a tonic to us all in this woeful business which presses upon us (however optimistic we may be) with the weight of a nightmare.

Especially has this been felt since Parliament has ceased to be (in the sense it was once) an efficient critic of the Government.

This Parliament has by common consent long ago exhausted its mandate, but that is not all. By an act approaching imbecility it destroyed its own machinery for securing perpetual vigilance in regard to and criticism of the Executive which ought to be by far its most important function in a democratic community, and which has nowhere been so well supplied as under our system of government by party, with responsible leaders on either side.

The cant about the curse of party government, which many politicians affect, neglects the lessons of all our English experience, lessons, as we have seen lately, most inadequately supplied by the irresponsible criticism of scattered and isolated individuals, each with a different aim in view.

It has very unfortunately happened that, at a time when the need was most urgent that the two parties in the House should exercise their distinct functions most efficiently, the party in power and the party in opposition have been combined in one complacent Coalition. This has naturally led to the paralysis of effective discussion of the doings of the Government. Those who used to criticise now sit in the same Cabinet with their former opponents and both are dominated by the theory of Cabinet responsibility.

Each member of the Government, whatever his previous views or opinions, has to sink them and to hold a friendly umbrella over those he formerly denounced, and to become an apologist for each of his colleagues, however inefficient, stupid, or ill-endowed he may be. A gag shuts his mouth when he ought to be criticising the antecedents of various universally acknowledged delinquents; let me mention as notorious examples Mr. Birrell, Lord Haldane, and Mr. Winston Churchill. All this is most unfortunate and in fact indecent. It was all foreseen and foretold by some far-seeing statesmen such as Lord Cromer, and I myself spent many adjectives out of my considerable store in long letters in the *Times* on the subject.

This is not all. The Coalition was first proposed, not merely to stop criticism, but to save the skins of a completely discredited party, which was on the brink of destruction from an impending rebellion of the whole country against its administrative methods. There was no pretence of any kind that the previous state of things was causing or was likely to cause the smallest danger to the vigorous prosecution of the War. Everyone was unanimous about that. What was more urgently needed, however, than ever before in our history, was an efficient opposition by an organised party. That urgent need was sacrificed. Hence these tears. I suppose I shall be told that the practice of recovering spilt milk is a proverbial form of imbecility.

I entirely differ. There is a drastic remedy which would cure a great deal of what we are suffering from—namely, an appeal from the present decrepit and obsolete

House of Commons to the constituencies which it no longer represents. This appeal has been postponed and postponed, not because of public benefit to the State and to the Empire, but for the purpose of preserving places and the appurtenances attached to them for a body of men, some of whom the country no longer believes in, and would not tolerate after an election. It would also introduce a good many new ideas and vigorous personalities. These things, it may be said, are true but indefinite. Let me be more precise.

What complaint do we make on behalf of the public opinion which faces us wherever we go and among all classes as to the outlook of things political? The complaint is not in regard to the legislative side of Parliament, which is largely in abeyance, but in regard to the collapse of the Executive in the most elementary duties of government, and the acquiescence of the two old parties in the shameful fact. Their primary function was to keep an eye on each other, and to see to it that in time of war our internal strength should not be sapped by internal weakness and notably the continued toleration of the most dangerous and treasonable organisation ever permitted by a strong and civilised nation.

I receive almost every week from an old and cherished friend of mine who has large interests in the West of Ireland, and has always resided there, copies of newspapers containing the most disconcerting and disastrous news that is conceivable. The West of Ireland, as too many people know, has been for some time in a condition of semi-revolution, and has almost entirely passed into the control of a body of desperadoes led by Roman priests, who flaunt the badges of a rebellious party on their cassocks, urge its cause from their pulpits and their platforms, and head its processions.

How has such a state of things arisen? Its roots are too far back to make it profitable to trace them in detail in this letter, but you may permit me to follow their latest development. When the great revolt took place in Dublin, where so many lives were lost and so much property was destroyed, it was put down by the soldiers, and their commander was given large powers under martial law to stamp out the rebellion. Some of the leaders who were guilty of arson and murder were tried and executed. Peace was restored, and what everybody prayed for was that there might be for a while a stringent exercise of vigilance and prevention of outrage, the drastic stopping of incitements to crime by the application of the law, and, if necessary, the re-enactment of provisions which had proved effective before. When things were looking much better the fires were again lighted by an act approaching madness. Mr. Asquith, who had no immediate knowledge of Ireland and its problems, and was a mere didactic dilettante and amateur in dealing with them, went to Ireland with all the prestige behind him of a Prime Minister. He walked through ruined streets and learned at first hand of the murder and pillage that had occurred. Thereupon this most accomplished personage, who had been playing at politics with the Nationalists for forty years, and had studied all the arts of retiring before the enemy, in order to encourage the soldiers whose comrades had been killed in the execution of their duty by a parcel of rebels, visited the prisoners, shook hands with the murderers, and praised their patriotism and their courage. Everybody who had any decent feelings left quaked and quivered with indignation at the exhibition and expected a stampede among the police who had been so treacherously dealt with. This was followed by the dismissal of the general to whom we owed the putting down of the revolt.

The very next newspapers I received from Western Ireland contained a grim comment on the whole miserable spectacle. They told their people that the Sinn Feiners had been pronounced to be heroes by the Prime Minister. Very naturally the movement at once spread by leaps and bounds, and almost every Nationalist in large parts of the West and South joined the self-confessed rebels and abandoned the party which had claimed to speak for Ireland for 40 years.

Mr. Birrell, whose career had been one long series of impotent mistakes, surrender, and incompetence, and who had been kept in his post by "*the Coalition Government*," had to go and a successor had to be found. He was found. It is said he even sought the place himself and went to try his hand at buttering Irish parsnips. He was equipped with personal attractiveness and was a skilled lawyer, but in regard to any knowledge of the country, of the conditions to be met, or of the psychology of the race he had to come in contact with, he immediately showed that he had none. In the speeches he made he repeated the nauseous sentimentality which is always detestable as a solvent of political difficulties. He went with his heart in his hands and his head in his pocket, to solve a problem which had baffled the wit of several generations of very able men, and he adopted precisely the same methods as all his predecessors of the last 40 years in the same position had done. He relied on rhetorical flabdoodle, which English juries relish, and forgot he was dealing with a nation of rhetoricians who had learnt every art of imposing upon a sentimental people like the English, and he ended by jeopardising once again the foundations of criminal justice in Ireland by interfering with the sentences of the Courts and by a most indiscriminate use of the practice of revising sentences. For all this he no doubt had ample precedents, and lawyers love precedents.

Meanwhile, as the Sinn Fein kept growing, Mr. Lloyd George, whose success had been phenomenal in temporarily patching up quarrels, made a fresh attempt at a solution. He invented the great Conference at which the wisecracks of all parties save one (but that was the most essential of all) met together to discuss all forms of constitutions, with my friend, Mr. McNeill, taking the place of Aristotle as a specialist in such matters, and they discussed them quite gravely like a gathering of circle squarers trying to solve the insoluble. We are told they have had many pleasant gatherings and dinners. They have told us what a parcel of nice people they are and how they love each other, and have hinted that, like the tortoise in the race, they were making progress. What a farce the whole thing has been! What a farce it was bound to be (perhaps it was intended to be)! How could it be otherwise? For 40 years we have discussed Home Rule with the Nationalists, to conciliate whom the Palaver was instituted. The Nationalists dominate the Convention, but are nowhere outside it. They are wiped out so far as they represent any kind of opinion in Ireland. They would probably not secure 20 seats in a general election. The Sinn Fein leaders, who have replaced them, declare positively—and they have their people with them—that they will not hear of any plan but separation for settling the matter, while they agree with the Irish hierarchy that nothing will induce them to tolerate a mutilated part of Ulster from the Ireland they are fighting for. They laugh and jeer at the party known as Nationalists and denounce its leaders as humbugs and charlatans who have entirely ceased to represent anything but a fraction of Irish opinion; and they prove that their pretensions are not mere bluster but very real by fighting and beating them in the Irish constituencies. They will have none of Mr. Redmond's or Mr. Dillon's remedies and entirely repudiate their right to barter away what they deem their heritage for a mess of parliamentary porridge.

This has been known for a long time. It was known when the Ulster Unionists were driven or cajoled to join in the great "Talk" in spite of their knowledge of the impossibility of equating their minimum claims with those of Archbishop Logue and his brethren. The whole thing has been a piece of patent humbug, devised, as we are told, not with hopes of success, but in order to meet the wishes of certain American politicians who have their own nuts to crack. Instead of being helpful it has had the result of breaking the last bottle in the bin and postponing Home Rule to the Day of Judgment; but it has also imperilled many reputations, especially of



those who, having fought against it for 40 years, have been surrendering their creed and burning their banners, while the *Times*, which for nearly half a century fought bravely on the same side, has thrown over all it said on the subject and been acting as their drum-major on their march towards Jericho.

What a blessed thing, to be sure, is a Political Coalition!

Yours respectfully,

HENRY H. HOWORTH.

#### THE CLUB HABIT.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

13 October 1917.

SIR,—Being a constant reader of the SATURDAY REVIEW, I was much amused at your article on "The Club Habit" by a "Member of Bayes."

I trust the "Member of Bayes" will not be annoyed if I say that, while agreeing that all men like going to clubs, even if they are devoted husbands, I must sympathise with him on the type of women that he is in the habit of meeting.

I quite believe that a man wishes to show himself in the most favourable light when in the presence of women and that he strives to please, but to say that "he narrows his outlook to their horizon and restricts his topics to those they can appreciate" is, if I might say so, absurd.

I pity him if the only women he knows spend their time in looking at the pictures in the morning paper, in dissecting the reputation of a statesman's wife and talking of servants, dresses, gossip, and tittle-tattle gleaned from the "Society Press." I fear he is a Rip Van Winkle, and is writing of a very small coterie of women who lived in mid-Victorian days.

I, being a woman, and consequently having a fair knowledge of my own sex and also of the other sex, think that conversation between a man and a woman, always excepting love-making pure and simple, is most stimulating. The woman generally is most anxious to discuss public affairs—say, the conduct of the war—and probably has as good an opinion as to the relative merits of politicians, admirals, generals, etc., etc., as any ordinary man. My experience shows that the average man dislikes talking "shop," as he calls it, and prefers badinage or chaff.

I know there are a great many men who treat women as if they were a cross between children and idiots. The following story endorses this: A great potentate in Europe, with whom we are now at war, was asked by an intelligent woman what calibre the guns were to be on one of his battleships. He replied in a most supercilious tone of voice, "Where do you get your bonnets from?"

My experience also is that most women are very fond of sport, and ride and play games as well as any man. Even if they do not shoot or stalk themselves, they are frequently excellent authorities on such sports, and, as to telling a good story, they are equally capable of being as good raconteurs or raconteuses as the most amusing of men.

The average woman only expects the same good manners from a man as are usual from a man to a woman and from a woman to a man. No woman wants to be told that she is looking well, or that her hat is becoming, as, if either of these two facts are true, she knows it without being told, and every woman, whatever class she belongs to, possesses a looking-glass!

I reiterate that I think the "Member of Bayes" must have been curiously unlucky in his woman friends, for, believe me, the average woman likes to meet the average man in a spirit of what our French neighbours call "camaraderie" or companionship.

Every sensible woman likes the man who is popular

with men. The genus "tame cat" is almost extinct, thanks to the war.

I trust that most of your readers will take this common-sense point of view taken by

THE AVERAGE WOMAN.

#### CONSERVATISM AND THE NATIONAL PARTY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

70 South Audley Street, W.

22 October 1917.

SIR,—Mr. Ryder, in yours of the 20th, criticises the statements and aims of the new National Party. It seems to me that the statements issued by the party show clearly and concisely the policy to be followed, and they show the idea of its present leaders to get away from the old and out-of-date party ruts. Some people seem to find it difficult to recognise the lofty aims of the National Party and the wish to get right away from the sordid part of politics.

The definition of its principles is excellent; the crux of the question will be to get its representatives to live up to those principles. Many of our politicians of late years, both before and after the war, have shown a great want of moral courage, a desertion of principles, and a sacrifice of conscience to the party whip. The men who have started the new movement have shown the courage of their convictions, and their rebellion against the sacrifice of conscience, by their action in breaking away from the old party ties, risking old friendships, and by going before their constituents with an honest statement of their convictions. How many of the politicians in the House of Commons are ready to do this?

The National Party represents the interests of the nation first before anything else. Anyone who has followed Australian politics this year can see what the newly-formed National Party there has done for Australia. There is now a strong Government in power, representative of all interests. They were able to handle the late threatened general strike of railwaymen, seamen, and other affiliated unions (over some matter of discipline), which would have been disastrous in these times, with a firmness that a strong National Government is able to exhibit. Result, the strike collapses and the men all go back as they were. What a contrast to the actions of the Coalition Government here, who are constantly allowing the nation to be bled more and more by acceding to the constantly increasing demands of some of the unions, and by their weakness and irresolution encourage that "Ferment of Revolution" which thoughtful men are writing about so much now!

If the patriotic people of this country will join this new movement and recognise its lofty aims, then in time I have enough confidence in the British nation still to hope that strong patriotic leaders will be found who will be able to rescue the British Empire from the "slough" into which it is in danger of falling.

I am, Sir,

Yours, etc.,

H. F. DE LITTLE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Glendora, Hindhead, Surrey.

22 October 1917.

SIR,—Your esteemed correspondent, Mr. C. F. Ryder, who performs, in Yorkshire, the useful function attributed in Gilbert and Sullivan's opera, "Iolanthe," to the late Captain Shaw—namely, the power to invigorate us with occasional cold drenchings of common-sense—exposes in the current SATURDAY REVIEW the peculiar remedy of the "National Party" against party government by creating still another party bidding for the support of the electorate.

What, I take it, that the party which looks, in the House of Commons, to the Chancellor of the Exchequer

and the Foreign Secretary as its leaders, wishes to know is in what degree the eight members of that House who were returned as their supporters, but who now declare themselves members of the new National Party, are still to be regarded as within the fold?

The Conservatives still, I believe, possess a Whips' office and a central association for electoral purposes. Yet we find the eight members, aforesaid, active in the denunciation of all accepted methods of party organisation and the collection and administration of funds—without which it is certain that all political activity in the interests of the Coalition, or otherwise, must come to an end.

Like Sir Squire Bancroft, in a celebrated Haymarket play, I only advance this query "in a spirit of mild enquiry," but I venture to think that you, Sir, will agree that one is entitled to some reply.

Your obedient servant,

J. LANDFEAR LUCAS.

#### OUR NEUTRAL FRIENDS?

Dundee, 8 October 1917.

SIR,—Henceforward Holland ought to be exonerated from a Laodicean neutrality. It should be recognised as one of the most helpful, sympathetic, and friendly States to the Allies. Tens of thousands of expatriated Belgians have received a cordial welcome from the Dutch people. Kindness and hospitality have been the portion of the unfortunate refugees. M. Edouard Soulier, a Lutheran pastor, and M. Samuel Rocheblave, a distinguished littérateur in Paris, were sent on an "amicable visit" to Holland. It lasted four months. M. Rocheblave gives a graphic account in the *Revue des deux Mondes* for October of their sojourn among these "Neutres du Nord." They asked themselves with a little anxiety, "In what disposition towards France will we find these people?" Long before they left Holland all anxiety was completely dispelled. All classes, from Queen Wilhelmina to the industrial workers, treated them with marked kindness. They were hailed with enthusiasm at The Hague, at Amsterdam, and everywhere with enthusiastic sympathy for the martyrdom of France, and admiration for the heroic deeds of its soldiers was expressed in an unequivocal and an impressive manner.

M. Rocheblave had proof of this at his first conference, when he delivered a discourse on "France d'après Michelet." *La Gazette de Holland* devoted to that meeting a long article. "The entire hall," it said, "burst into applause when the speaker recalled that phrase of Montesquieu, who, having said that he must prefer his family to himself, added, 'If they proposed to me one thing that was useful to my country, and which was destructive to Europe, I would reject it as a crime.' The editor asked, 'That France so beautiful, so ideal has seen Michelet: well, is France, to-day, not more beautiful and more idealistic than at the most glorious period of her history?'"

M. Rocheblave, at Amsterdam, thanked M. Boissevain, venerated father of the Press, for a sympathetic article regarding France. He replied: "I am heart and soul Hollandais, and yet France is for us all a sacred country and loved. Oh, how I pray for its victory!"

THOMAS OGILVY.

#### THE FOREIGN VOTE IN THE UNITED STATES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—At this time, when the Swedish affair is being considered from every angle, it is quite important to know how the Swedes in America feel, and what effect their attitude is likely to have on Swedes at home. The

writer has had plenty of opportunities for observing those in the States during a period of many years, and he would suggest that, of all nationalities there, the Swedes keep closest in touch with the home folk. Every Christmas-time huge boat-loads of them go back to enjoy the holidays in Sweden. They come in crowds from the North-West, Minnesota, and the Dakotas, and from all the Western States, Iowa and Illinois included. They save up for their annual pilgrimages. However, they soon become Americanised, and tell their folks in the old country all about America and what can be done there, and their influence is all in favour of America. Most of them end by becoming good citizens. As the American Swedes are rich beyond imagination, compared with the ordinary folk at home, their influence on the populace is considerable.

Now, a few words as to the feelings towards one another of the various nationalities in such a huge melting-pot as Chicago, for example, and in a general way over the country at large, may not be amiss at this time.

The Germans and Irish do not love one another. One is a "fat Dutchman" and the other "a red-headed Turk" in their complimentary interchange of endearments.

The Swedes in Chicago do not love the Germans, no matter how they feel elsewhere. The fiercest fights—when war broke out—in front of the newspaper bulletin boards in Chicago were all between the Swedes, Germans, and Irish, and a nice mix-up it was.

The Poles do not love the Germans.

The Italians do not love the Germans.

The Jews, however, in part, do. There are very many German Jews in Chicago, but they do not love the Kaiser or the Catholic German element; in fact, they do not mix with them.

The Russians, mostly Jews and Socialists, for the same reason do not love the ordinary German.

Now a few words as to the vote of these different nationalities—whether it usually goes Democratic or Republican. Of old, the foreign vote was considered Democratic, but that was when the bulk of the immigration was from the British Isles. To-day it is different, and, there being no special appeal to the particular policy of the moment, such as a big change in the tariff:

The Irish vote goes Democratic.

The Germans in the main vote the Republican ticket.

Note this particularly, for it simply means that President Wilson never had to concern himself in the least about the German vote. It went against him at his first election, and it went against him at the last. It is always counted in the Republican ticket.

The Swedes vote Republican. They have, in one notable instance, united on a Democratic Governor of their own race, the late Governor Johnson of Minnesota.

The Poles vote Republican, though there is too strong a Catholic Polish Democratic vote.

The Italians vote Republican.

The Catholic vote, though shifted to suit conditions of expediency or locality, is apt to be Democratic.

The Jews and German Jews vote Republican.

The Russians incline to be entire Socialistic, though it is hard to classify them collectively.

This applies to the Northern States. In the South there is, of course, considerable shifting over of the "foreign" vote to the Democratic side.

And what of the Scotch, English, and Canadian voters? Oh, they don't count! They're just Americans, and vote with individual expression as such, and not collectively as hyphenates; but mainly the general run of them are Republicans, except that those coming from the better—well, what should one say?—one hates to use the word "class"—well, then, better-placed Canadian, English, or Scotch families may have leanings to the Democratic party. They follow the old lines of sympathy in the old struggle between North



and South, and it may be noted that in President Wilson's small Cabinet there is one native-born Scotsman and one native-born from Prince Edward's Island, both, of course, Democrats. J. M. C. HAMPSON.

"IF YOU WANT PEACE, PREPARE FOR WAR."  
To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

41 Anerley Park, S.E.20.

SIR,—Your correspondent D. N. Samson, who, unlike the late Premier, remains unconverted and untaught by the awful lessons of the present cataclysmic war, quotes Shakespeare in support of the above pernicious pagan maxim, respect to which on the part of professing Christian countries has already cost Europe 20 million lives, and such colossal waste and destruction as, in terms of money, would have probably abolished poverty from this earth for a generation at least.

But would not Shakespeare, had he been able to foresee warfare extended to the air, and the waters under the seas, and the whole non-combatant populations in danger of being exterminated by vast fleets of "aerial navies, dropping down their ghastly dew"; or could he have known that, even if the total destruction of large populations were not threatened by the multiplication of ever-improving submarines, aeroplanes, and gases, at any rate the world would perish by starvation through the diverting of all economic forces to the channels of destruction; I say, had Shakespeare, in a word, been able to visualise all that modern warfare must mean, in an ever-growing crescendo of deadliness and dreadfulness, when waged in all the elements, by all the scientific and mechanical strength, not of armies but of whole nations, would he not, had he then heard of any further "preparations for war," have exclaimed with redoubled emphasis, "It is a mad world, my masters!"?

Yours, etc.,

A. E. CLARKE,  
President, The Bible Brotherhood.

THE LEVY ON CAPITAL.  
To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

13 Cathcart Hill, N.

SIR,—I observe that you give to Mr. Emil Davies the credit (or discredit, as you would doubtless say) of being the first to suggest a Levy on Capital, and state that the occasion was just before the last Budget. The idea, however, was actually started in the *New Age* editorial columns eighteen months before Mr. Davies took it up, and was there carried on week after week with such clever if damnable iteration that several journals (including the *Round Table*, you may be surprised to hear) were at last persuaded to support it. Mr. Davies was really rather late in the field, though he has proved a useful champion. ACTON REED.

#### LITERARY CRITICISM.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I send in view of your remarks on literary criticism the following reflections by a well-known author at the end of his life. Leigh Hunt in his "Autobiography" (chapter 23) writes:—

"It is said, and I believe truly, that no man in the long run can be written down, or up, except by himself; but it is painful to think how much can be done to both purposes in the meantime, and for those who deserve neither the one nor the other. A secret history of criticism, for some twenty years at a time, with its favouritisms, its animosities, and its hesitations, would make a very curious book; but the subject would be so disagreeable that it would require almost as disagreeable a person to write it."

Yours faithfully,  
CANTAB.

#### REVIEWS.

MR. GLADSTONE'S MENTOR.

Selections from the Correspondence of the First Lord Acton. Edited by J. N. Figgis and R. V. Laurence. Vol. I. Longmans, Green and Co. 15s. net.

LORD ACTON was one of the greatest authorities on ecclesiastical history that ever lived; he was a staunch Liberal; and Gladstone recognised his merits by making him a lord-in-waiting to Queen Victoria! The ecclesiastical correspondence, as the editors call it, in this volume is interesting as showing not only the prodigious learning but the tolerance and breadth of view of one of the most distinguished of the school of Neo-Catholics, as the followers of Dr. Döllinger were sometimes called. A Roman Catholic who does not believe in Papal infallibility and sees good in other men's creeds is rather a rare bird. But Lord Acton knew too much of the history of Christianity to be a bigot: and, indeed, he hated Ultramontanism, if so strong a passion can be ascribed to so cold and detached a mind. Lord Acton was a curious mixture of Italian, German, and English, for, though he came of an old Somersetshire family, he was on his mother's side and by education a cosmopolitan. Lord Acton knew so much that he has left nothing behind but a few lectures of the Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, some scattered magazine articles, and a voluminous correspondence with many eminent persons, of which the Drew Letters have already appeared, and of which the volume before us is a further instalment. Dry light was the atmosphere in which Lord Acton breathed easily, and, though he knew too many men as well as books to be dull, the lovers of personalities and gossip biography are warned off. On the other hand, those who wish to understand something of the beginnings of Continental Liberalism in Church and State will find so much instruction in Lord Acton's letters that they will be well repaid for the attentive reading which they demand.

That Gladstone was under a heavy intellectual obligation to Lord Acton is evident. Many a time did he save that restless politician and shallow thinker from "howlers" in history and theology. Gladstone's mind had become so demoralised by incessant party warfare that in his excursions into the region of theology he was as rash and unscrupulous as he was in his election speeches. Gladstone actually believed that he had smashed Huxley in the controversy over the Gadarene Swine, though to anyone with the faintest notion of evidence it was obvious that the man of science had pulverised the political talker. Gladstone had just sense and caution enough to know that Lord Acton knew more than he; and it is amusing to read how calmly Lord Acton corrected blunders in the adored chief of which Macaulay's schoolboy would have been ashamed. It suited Gladstone's polemical purpose, for instance, to assert that there had been no ethical code worthy of the name outside Christianity; and further to maintain that the miracles occurred in a sceptical rather than a credulous age. He appealed to Lord Acton for confirmation of his theories: but though the great scholar loved Gladstone, he loved the truth more. "*Amicus Gladstone, magis amica veritas*," Acton must have whispered to himself as he wrote the following reply: "In spite of your caveat, I think you incline to underrate the value and elevation of pre-Christian ethics. The image of the downward course of paganism is so much more strongly impressed on your mind than that of its upward course that I fancy you hardly appreciate such an achievement as the ethics of Seneca, Epictetus, and from another quarter Philo, wrought by men who had not the example of Christ before them. . . . If by morality you mean the lives of men, modern society has not much

to boast of, compared, for instance, with the practical morality of the Essenes. If you mean the doctrines of men, it would be very difficult indeed to show that the interval between the ethics of Seneca and the ethics of S. Ambrose could never have been bridged over by the progress and combination of Stoic, Alexandrian, and Chinese morality, as they stood, apart from the Gospel. An opponent might say that many influences besides Christ's teaching contribute to the moral enlightenment of the present world; that Christianity at first, in its outward purity, in its early writers, stood less high in some points than we do, and was not all progress over that which went before it; and that taking the action of the Church at times, apart from other influences, it has not always promoted a lofty ideal of duty" (p. 264). As to the miracles, Acton pointed out in another letter that "in examining the appetite for the miraculous we have to distinguish between the people and the age which produced the New Testament and the people and the age which received it: between the Jews of the first century and the pagans of 150 years later." Acton admits that at the time of Christ's ministry, under Stoic and Epicurean influences, the tone of the age was rationalist, but that was not the age which accepted the Gospel. By the beginning of the third century, when Christianity began to take root in pagan society, "the rationalism of the Augustan age had made way for systems as full of the marvellous" (Neo-Platonism and Neo-Pythagoreanism) "as the old mythology which fades away in Livy" (pp. 208-9). The author of 'The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture' must have been a little dashed by these replies from the great Catholic historian.

Acton was a sincere lover of liberty, and he was a political Liberal only because he believed that the Liberal party was the best instrument for the defence of personal freedom. He discerned in 1885 the rising death-struggle between absolute monarchy and democratic revolution, and he disliked both, because both meant centralisation, which in its turn means the enslavement of the individual. It was for that deep philosophic reason that he supported Gladstone's Home Rule Bills, for Acton always looked through the vote-catching politics of the hour at the underlying principles. He thought that the only restraint which democracy would submit to (judging from history) was federalism. He agreed with Madison and Alexander Hamilton that to break up democracy into small packets, to divide its terrible power, was the only way to escape its tyranny; and he pointed to modern France as an instance of over-centralisation.

There is a remarkable letter from Gladstone, written in February 1885, six months before his first defeat, showing his distrust of the State Socialism then creeping into favour with the Liberal Party. "The Liberalism of to-day is better in what I have described as ennobling the old Conservatism: nay, much better, yet far from being good. Its pet idea is what they call construction, that is to say, taking into the hands of the State the business of the individual man." Lord Acton's nearest approach to a quarrel with Gladstone was over the Naval Estimates, which Gladstone refused to increase. Acton pointed out that without a preponderantly strong Navy we should be at the mercy of France and driven to seek refuge in the Triple Alliance! That reads queerly to-day, but Acton's foreign policy was that England should keep out of European quarrels in strong and benevolent, if not splendid, isolation.

Both Gladstone and Acton were deficient in literary judgment. Gladstone thought 'Robert Elsmere' a book that would change the world of religious thought. Acton declared "I would give all the imaginative literature since Shakespeare for George Eliot's writings," and he described her as "a perfect atheist." Surely that is an unbalanced judgment. It is worth noting that virtuous atheism had a strong attraction both for Gladstone and Acton.

#### THE RUSSIAN CHURCH.

**Birkbeck and the Russian Church: Containing Essays and Articles by the late W. J. Birkbeck. Written in the years 1888-1915. Collected and edited by his friend, Athelstan Riley. S.P.C.K. 8s. 6d. net.**

**M**R. BIRKBECK'S knowledge of Russia was extensive and peculiar, as nearly as possible, indeed, unique, seeing that he devoted himself exclusively to the study of the theology and doctrine of the Orthodox Church. He was an Anglican of a sort which we may be well satisfied to see represented among us; a layman who was an accurate and cautious theologian, from whom clerical fools, whether episcopal or presbyteral, received scant respect. At the same time one feels that it is just as well for the English Church that men of his type should be few and far between, and that, for the greater part of us, adherence to the old paths is the safest rule of conduct. The papers included in this volume have, primarily, an interest for a somewhat limited class, that which puts the hopes of the Church of England in a gradual approximation to the Eastern Church and eventual union with it. But at the present juncture of affairs Mr. Birkbeck's observations have an interest for a much wider public. When we look out on the confused welter of interests swaying the course of Russia from day to day in different directions, we find ourselves awaiting something which has not yet made itself felt. Like "the ship that found herself" in Mr. Kipling's story, we have still to hear the voice of Russia.

Now, pre-eminently among European nations, Russia is a country of peasants. While but one in ten live by the land in this country, four out of five do so there. Any attempt at predicting the nature of the permanent settlement of its affairs must therefore take into account the main influences at work on the peasant's mind, which are land hunger, his instinct for co-operation, and his religion, to name them in the order which strikes most observers. Up to the present, attention has been concentrated on the first of these, with a side-glance at the second, while, if anyone has mentioned the third, it is to speak of the "pitiful debasement and servility of intellect" it produces among the peasantry, and "the almost universal devotional mummeries" which are its outward signs. Is Russian religion or the Russian Church to sway, in any way, the course of events?

Naturally, these papers return no direct answer, written, as they were, at intervals over a quarter of a century, but we gather from them a number of valuable hints and sidelights. A paper on the monasteries of Russia, in particular, supplies a master key to the situation. The Church of Russia is, and always has been, a monastic one; it is governed entirely by monks, and the priest, as such, can never rise to importance in the hierarchy. Moreover the monastery is, even more than the church, the central focus of Russian life: it has been, in the past, its chief colonising agent and the inspirer of national unity; the monk has been the pioneer in the task of settling European Russia from the Baltic to the Volga, from the White Sea to the Black. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that Russian religion displays the peculiar qualities which monasticism encourages.

This explains much that puzzles the observer in Russia. The religion around them is unfeigned, yet the true believers will steal, lie, break all the Commandments one after the other without hesitation and with no unnecessary compunction. To the Western mind this attitude is impossible, to the Eastern Churchman religion is not a matter of good works, but of faith. Accordingly he gets along very well without sermons; he goes to church for worship, not for preaching; his good works are penance and fasting, and the deepening of his religious life tends towards mysticism rather than activity. This being so, there is obviously little to be hoped for from the Russian Church as an influence on national action.



On the other hand, once let the existence of Russia be threatened, and the unity of the Orthodox Church be threatened, then the whole power, legitimate and illegitimate, of the hierarchy will come into play. Over and over again in the history of the country have the great monasteries shown themselves centres and protectors of national feeling. This is a force which the international band of tag, rag, and bobtail, who have at present usurped command in Petrograd have up to now succeeded in not arraying against themselves. But the delay is only a matter of time, and when once the Soviet lays hands on the Church it will find something like a united Russia against it.

There are in this work a number of essays on other subjects which well repay a careful reading. That on 'Vladimir na Kljasme' will introduce, even to many travellers in Russia, an historic town, which, under happier circumstances, might have been the centre of a Russian architecture as great as that of the Ile de France. The account of Mr. Birkbeck's visit to Galicia contains an amount of information on the religious aspect of the Ruthenian movement which is of great value, even allowing for the unconscious bias of the observer, and that of the Slavonic language may remove some objections to its use in the services raised by acute critics like Dr. Williams.

#### A STUDY IN COURAGE.

**The Red Planet.** By William J. Locke. John Lane. 6s.

MR. LOCKE is par excellence a wanderer—in the manner of Sterne—through the "fantastic inland of Bohemia." For all such wanderers life is a romantic adventure, and none the less real for that. Indeed, from the hills of their magic country they get a clearer vision of the truth than do most of the mortals below them, and perceive that no frontier separates the world from wonderland. In 'The Red Planet' Mr. Locke takes us to a hum-drum country town invested with sudden and dramatic tragedy by fate and the War. The people he describes belong to the everyday circle of an English countryside. The story is told by no unconventional knight-errant, but by a retired officer of artillery. Nevertheless the spell holds. Major Duncan Meredyth is a distinctive type and an appealing figure, is over-fond of a finger in other people's pies, but we recognise that, like another and famous old soldier, there was that about him "which eternally beckoned to the unfortunate to come and take shelter under him." Indeed, he and his devoted servant, Sergeant Marigold, of the grotesque countenance and the one tender, fearless, humorous blue eye, are a pair not unworthy of the companionship of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim. Crippled by a shell in the Boer War, the Major becomes at once the mentor and the father-confessor of his little town. We are not surprised that his friends confide in him, and that Leonard Boyce, whose story he tells, is no exception to the rule. A man capable of reckless valour and a distinguished officer, Boyce is subject to moments of paralysing physical terror which he cannot control and which dog both his professional career and his private life with disaster. A faculty for subterfuge saves him time and again from open disgrace; but it cannot save him from the remorse which haunts him and which drives him to seek the deadliest dangers at the front in self-atonement. Nor can it save him from the tragedy which his cowardice entails.

In the relations between the two Mr. Locke has given us a very human study. Some of his minor characters seem to be fitted into, rather than to grow out of, the story; but we have only one serious quarrel with him. We cannot like Betty, and Betty is the heroine. We know that the world of to-day owes a limitless debt to these strenuous, emphatic Bettys. But they are so very sure and aware of themselves! They air such sweeping theories of life, and their theories are so many!

#### THE CITY.

NOTWITHSTANDING all the political troubles in Russia, the prices of Kyshtim and Irtysh have not fallen much, and are still at a substantial premium. This is due to the fact that the shares are strongly held by those who know all about the mines, and who believe in the future of Russia, and also to the great distance of the smelting works from Petrograd and the war zone. It would not, of course, be true to say that the war has not affected these mining propositions. Kyshtim, for instance, which is a copper and gold mine, is only producing two-thirds of its ante-bellum output, and it suffers, like every other business, from depletion of labour. But "what it loses on the swings it gains on the roundabouts," for it is getting very high prices for its gold and copper. Irtysh is one of the biggest mining propositions (chiefly zinc) in the world; and holders of these Russian shares need not be alarmed though they may have to wait a year or two until the common sense of the Russian peasantry has shot or hung the revolutionary anarchists of the large towns.

The meeting of the Rubber Growers' Association ended very unsatisfactorily, as both the Council and the Young Producers' Committee showed themselves determined to resist all attempts at a compromise, and had packed the room with partisans. General Philipps, M.P., shouted and shook his fist till everybody laughed, and the members of the Council droned till everybody stamped and called "Time." All this fuss was over the question who should represent the Young Producers' case at the rehearing by the Tribunal on Excess Profits Tax. A poll was demanded, and will be kept open for a fortnight. If the Council is defeated, it is understood many of them will resign. But the rubber industry is now so well organised, and so many of the directors of companies have learned their business that it does not much matter if a few representatives of merchant-agent firms and a few planters go off the Council. The planting of rubber in the East and the distribution of the commodity in the West are two quite different businesses, and the Council of the R.G.A. is not so important a body as it was.

The offer of 250,000 Seven per Cent. Cumulative and Participating "B" Preference shares of £1 in the Aircraft Manufacturing Co., Ltd., by the British, Foreign and Colonial Corporation at the price of 21s., has been sanctioned by the Treasury. The company appears to be a respectable and prosperous concern, and its profits have risen since 1914 from £22,256 to £107,361 in 1917. The fixed dividend on these shares is stated to be covered five times, and there are assets said to be equal to 30s. for each £1 subscribed. What strikes us with astonishment is the very small profit with which the issuing firm is content. The British, Foreign and Colonial Corporation has bought the whole issue at 21s. a share, less a commission of 7½ per cent., or 1s. 6d. a share. It is selling to the public at 21st. a share and paying an underwriting commission of 1s. a share and an over-riding commission of 3d. a share. So that apparently the total profit of the issuer is 3d. a share, or £3,100—about 1¼ per cent. Verily the palmy days of promoters are over.

The Argentine railway companies have been passing through very bad times. Last season's poor crops and the scarcity of shipping facilities resulted in wretched traffic receipts and the extremely high cost of coal—to say nothing of other expenses—made very severe inroads into profits. The Buenos Ayres Great Southern has managed to declare 4 per cent. for 1916-17, as compared with 4½ per cent. for the preceding year, and the Buenos Ayres Western 3 per cent., against 5 per cent., but in neither case was the amount to be distributed fully earned during the period. Since the current fiscal year commenced the situation has become complicated by the attitude of the Government and of labour. Having regard to the large increase in working costs and to the effect of the Pensions Act,

which alone would involve the railway companies in an additional expense of over £4,000,000 annually, the railways petitioned for an all-round increase of 22 per cent. in freight and passenger rates. This the Government flatly refused, and the railway men, probably encouraged by the emphatically unsympathetic attitude of the Government toward the companies, decided that the time was ripe for putting forward demands for large increases in wages and a considerable shortening of hours. The strike which promptly followed appears to have brought the Government to a sense of responsibility. A total cessation of railway communications was accompanied by riots, in which much damage to some of the lines is reported to have been done. After an abortive attempt to arrange a settlement, the President of the Republic exerted his personal influence with the men, who eventually decided to resume work "out of respect for President Irigoyen." The terms on which the men have agreed to return have not yet been stated, but it is officially understood that the companies are to be allowed to increase their rates by 22½ per cent. Whether this increase will suffice to meet the concessions made to the men and also cover the higher operating costs which had previously been experienced remains to be seen; but it is at least satisfactory to find the Government no longer totally deaf to the companies' sound arguments in support of higher rates.

It is a curiously significant fact that during all these troubles, although the quotations of the leading Argentine railway stocks have naturally declined, there has always been a strong undercurrent of investment demand, and even when matters were at their worst dealers have often been at their wits' end to supply stock. There are two main reasons for this: (1) After the decline that has occurred since the commencement of the war, amounting to more than 30 points in B.A.G.S., B.A. Westerns, and Central Argentine Ordinary stocks, holders were inclined rather to average than to sell; and (2) the experienced investor places immense faith in the recuperative power of Argentina after a period of poor crops. This faith seems likely to find some reward in the current year. Crop reports so far have been excellent, and the time has now arrived when it is reasonable to hope no widespread damage to grain will occur; indeed, so encouraging are the prospects of an abundant harvest that fears are entertained as to the sufficiency of supply of bags for transport. Special measures to meet this difficulty are now under official discussion. Furthermore, the price of coal in the Argentine will not always be six or eight times the pre-war level, and the end of the war—when it comes—should bring a revival of trade in the Republic. Consequently, while the present position of the railways leaves much to be desired, the ultimate outlook is by no means unpromising, and in the long run the faithful stockholders are likely to find that their confidence has not been misplaced.

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